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Remarks

The present response is to the Office Action mailed the above-referenced case on January 18, 2001. Claims 1-32 are presented below for examination. The Examiner has rejected claims 1-32 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being and patentable over Beck et al. (U.S. 6,345,305), hereinafter Beck, in view of Pepe et al. (5,742,905), hereinafter Pepe.

Applicant has carefully studied the prior references cited and applied by the Examiner, and the Examiner's rejections and statements in the instant Office Action. In response, applicant herein amends the claims to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter regarded as patentable, and to distinguish unarguably over the references as cited and applied by the Examiner. Applicant amends the language of the base claims to specifically recite that the interactive client interface component executing on the client device enables the client to access and alter communication center data independently of the communication center and regardless of whether or not a live connection exists between the client device and communication center. For convenience, applicant reproduces claim 1 as amended below.

Claim 1 as amended now recites:

1. An application for enabling a client to interact with communication-center resources comprising:

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an interactive client interface component executing on a client device and operable by the client for posting client data and for receiving and displaying agent and interaction data from the communication center;

a brokering component for managing client and communication center data and communication; and

a status monitoring and reporting component for monitoring and reporting communication center and client status;

characterized in that a client using the client interface is enabled to access and alter communication center data, independently of the communications center and regardless of whether or not a live connection exists between the client device and the communications center, and also to initiate live interaction with the communication center.

Applicant's independent claim 17 recites the customer-interaction system comprising the interactive client interface component in accordance with the limitations of claim 1, and applicant accordingly amends the language of the claim similarly to claim 1.

The Examiner has stated in the instant Office Action that, regarding claim 1, Beck discloses applicant's application for enabling a client to interact with communication-center resources comprising substantially the limitations of applicant's claim, with the exception that the application is characterized in that a client using the user interface is enabled to access and alter communication center data, and also to initiate live interaction with the communication center.

The Examiner has relied on the reference of Pepe for making up the deficiency in Beck, stating that Beck teaches, in an analogous art to networking, a system for personal communications internetworking wherein

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the user can modify his/her subscriber profile (col. 6, lines 34-45). Applicant
agrees that Beck teaches that a subscriber may access or alter specific
portions of the subscriber profile. However, the combined references fail to
teach or suggest all of the limitations of applicant's independent claims as
amended in this response.

Applicant's claim 1 now specifically recites that the interactive client
interface component executing on the client device enables the client to
access and alter communication center data independently of the
communication center and regardless of whether or not a live connection
exists between the client device and communication center. Applicant
argues that Beck/Pepe now fails to produce applicant's invention as claimed,
because neither reference teaches or suggests that the client at the client
device may access and alter communication center data independently of the
communication center and regardless of whether or not a live connection
exists between the client device and communication center.

As stated by the Examiner, Beck fails to teach a client interface
application wherein the client may access or alter communication center
data, and also to initiate live interaction with the communication center. The
Examiner has stated that Pepe teaches the limitation. However, according to
col. 34, lines 10-21 of Pepe, the invention provides a user interface software
executing on a PDA comprising screens such as the main menu screen of
Fig. 28, whereby a user may invoke icons to enter the routing
(CallCommand) or wireless messaging services, check status of a system,
such as messages waiting, current settings, and so on, and update a routing
profile maintained on the PCI server, by entering data into fields, or invoking
icons displayed on the PDA screen.

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Referring to Fig. 28 of Pepe, such a PDA screen display is illustrated, comprising button icons for entering the services, reviewing the current routing profile and current status of the system. However, Pepe does not provide a client the ability to update the subscriber profile maintained on the PCI server without first connecting to the PCI server. Applicant has carefully and thoroughly studied the reference of Pepe, and has found no specific teaching or suggestion of accessing or updating the profile data while disconnected from the node in which the profile data resides. Profile updates are performed only during connection between the PDA and the services, and are performed at the PCI server, via the user interface of the PDA.

The system of Pepe teaches that the subscriber user profile containing subscriber information is stored at the PCI database, and the subscriber has the ability to provide simple updates to the stored information by communicating first with the PCI server. The specification of Pepe specifically describes (col. 12, line 65 to col. 13, line 34) that when the subscriber wishes to update the subscriber profile using the PDA 30, a communication link is first made between PDA 30 and PCI server 48, and then updates to the subscriber user profile of PCI database 44 are performed in the PCI server 48. It is further described in Pepe (col. 13 line 35 to col. 14, line 13) that the update to the subscriber profile may also be performed using the touchtone telephone. Pepe teaches a PDA having a wireless network interface connected to exchange message routing parameters and an application for communicating with the interface to receive, update and transmit the message routing parameters, but the routing application for programming the routing changes clearly executes only on the server, not the client device, and a live connection must first be made between the PDA and the PCI server. Applicant argues, therefore, that the client device of Pepe is

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only capable of accessing or affecting changes to the communication center data by first connecting to the PCI server, and then, only during communication with the server.

Applicant's invention teaches a presence recording system for a communication center enhanced to provide clients of the center with a self-service user interface application, which enables the client to determine agent states without calling the center, publish his/her own state without requiring the center to initiate a call, and perform a variety of business-related tasks at the center without requiring any agent interaction. In prior art communication centers, such as those taught in the combined references relied upon by the Examiner, the client does not have the ability perform such tasks as tracking a job-order, review interaction history, view agent availability states, publish client-availability states and preferred contact mediums, initiate transactions from a variety of contact media through a single interface executing on the client device, independently of, and without requiring a live connection with the communication center. Applicant's unique system allows the client to set up parameters, etc. in real-time, rather than the normal way of requiring the client to logon to a client portal in order to access and update the communication center data, thereby substantially conserving communication center resources dedicated for client assistance and improving overall relations between clients and the entity hosting the communication center.

In view of applicant's above amendments to the independent claims, and arguments presented above which clearly distinguish applicant's invention, as recited in the claims as amended, over the combined art Beck\Pepe, applicant believes the independent claims are now clearly and unarguably patentable over the combined prior art. Depending claims 2-16
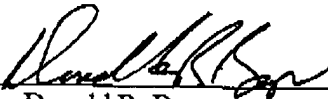
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and 18-32 are then patentable on their own merits, or at least as depended from a patentable claim.

As all of the claims standing for examination have been shown to be patentable as amended over the art of record, applicant respectfully requests reconsideration, and that the present case be passed quickly to issue. If there are any time extensions needed beyond any extension specifically requested with this amendment, such extension of time is hereby requested. If there are any fees due beyond any fees paid with this amendment, authorization is given to deduct such fees from deposit account 50-0534.

Respectfully Submitted,

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